

MBCA BOARD MEETING **Approved** MINUTES
Thursday April 13th, 2017
5:00 – 7:00 PM, Yucca Valley Community Center

Regular Meeting Call to Order - 5:10 PM

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Bardwell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sarah Kennington | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laraine Turk |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Fick | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruth Rieman | <input type="checkbox"/> Marina West (out of state) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pat Flanagan | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claudia Sall | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meg Foley | | |

Introduction of Guests and Board of Directors

- Almut Fleck, Board of Advisors
- Terri Weiner, Basin & Range Watch
- David Lamfrom, NPCA
- Stephanie Dashiell, Nature Conservancy
- Wendy Hadley, Pipes Canyon, Indivisible Morongo Basin
- Kerry Puckett, Wildlands

Agenda Input and Approval

There was **consensus** to table the Grant Status item and to allow guests to speak as the first item on the agenda after business items.

Approval of Minutes from March 9, 2017

Ruth moved to approve, Steve seconded, all agreed.

Treasurer’s Report

Steve noted we are about to have a lot of fiscal action because of the Landscape Tour. He will make a full report on the Tour in June since he and Sarah will not be able to make our May meeting.

GUEST SPEAKERS

1) David Lamfrom, NPCA re. Cadiz

The Cadiz project has been going on for 20+ years. David wants people to feel hopeful and confident; opportunities to succeed are possible. He reviewed the history and spoke of the recent and regretful Trump administration decision to override BLM’s original correct decision against the railroad ROW.

New efforts against Cadiz by NPCA and others will focus on the state level, maybe even legislation. State Assemblyman Mayes and Congressman Cook support Cadiz. Senator Feinstein and her staff will be visiting Cadiz with David and others. Senator Harris will also oppose Cadiz. The role of the Metropolitan Water District is important because of water transmission, the presence of Chromium in the desert water, and whether MWD has a full aqueduct. The water will be expensive, and recipient Santa Margarita Water District will have to deal with that.

Some conservation/environmental groups not with NPCA earlier (against Cadiz) are now. Supporters include National Resources Defense Council, The Wilderness Society, and national level Sierra Club. This provides access to large numbers of grassroots forces, which might affect contracts with various water districts within the constituencies of Cook, Mayes, and Calvert. Cook is vulnerable because he changed position; pushing him might help. Half of the California delegation has weighed in, with about 20 for and 10 against at this point. Cadiz did a lot of lobbying while a lot of us were working on the Monuments. David Bernhardt of Cadiz [was head of Trump’s transition team](#) and is up for a position in Interior.

NPCA and MDLT are working to get better data on Bonanza Spring, the most important desert spring within 100,000 square miles that is closest to Cadiz. If Bonanza is destroyed, Mojave Preserve and

Mojave Trails are negatively affected. This study will be peer reviewed. (Note: David said he would love to take folks out to Bonanza Springs with its huge riparian area.)

The SB County position has some holes. Desert Supervisors Lovingood and Ramos weren't there for the earlier vote. The County is worried they'd be sued if they pull out, but if we can prove inaccurate science and other data, that could help. Supporting water-focused candidates in the next elections is another important action to be taken.

2) Stephanie Dashiell, Nature Conservancy re. SB Co. & RCIS (Regional Conservation Investment Strategies / Assembly Bill 2087);

Stephanie provided a handout and spoke about AB 2087. In September 2016, California passed the Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS), which is similar to Natural Community Conservation Plans but voluntary and non-regulatory, no permits involved. NCCPs take too long, so this was devised as a quicker route to direct mitigation investment and to encourage conservation actions. A lot of impetus at the state level was regarding connectivity issues related to infrastructure projects. The focus is voluntary conservation assessment in advance of a project; protection, restoration, and enhancement actions regionally. There are mitigation credit agreements for a third party that can be used by infrastructure projects.

Sarah noted that she, Pat, and Paul Smith were at a meeting of the Countywide Vision Environmental Element Planning. She explained that SB County is ready to go forward and participate in RCIS (rather than NCCP). Dudek Consulting is leading the charge. They would be locking in conservation priorities ahead of infrastructure construction. The deadline is 2020 to get approvals for only 8 projects. Areas involved include western SB County plus a finger into the Morongo Basin. There's a possible combination of SB and Kern Counties.

There will be opportunities to get Morongo Basin priorities into the plan early. We have the conservation priorities data in the Green Info map on our website and MDLT has and continues to gather information. There are lots of interested parties in the Morongo Basin.

Tom Hudson is interested and wants public involvement. We need to get the County better informed.

3) Wendy Hadley, Indivisible Morongo Basin (IMB) re. environmental priorities.

Wendy explained the [Indivisible movement](#) in opposition to Trump's national agenda. Locally the goals are to: resist Trump; focus on local congressional advocacy; and embrace progressive values. Wonder Valley folks including MBCA members Chris Carraher and Beth Sheffield started it about 2 months ago. They intend to be loosely organized but have a coordinating council that is open for input, and are holding action meetings monthly. Environmental issues have the greatest interest, and MBCA Board of Advisors member Caroline Conway is its leader.

They are issue-focused. Specific actions for people to take are developed and shared, such as contacting legislators Cook, Feinstein, Harris, and Mayes by phone calling, writing, and social media sharing. They have created scripts to help people make useful calls, letters, postcards, etc. This week the main message is: no cuts to EPA funding, focused on Cook. Next week's topic will be Cadiz. At Earth Day they are requesting if they could put their postcards on our table, they want to collect and deliver. **All Directors present agreed to their request.**

Capacity Building & Organizational Issues

1) Finance Committee report: annual budget, etc.
Delay until June meeting.

2) Ruth Denison scholarship: applicant evaluation –SB, LT

Sarah and Laraine reported that the scholarship winner (the only applicant but very qualified) was Nicole Serrano. Laraine will share Nicole's application packet with Directors and Sarah will contact her. We'll then create a press release and put the information on the website.

3) Grant status: Rose "Indigenous Place, Space, & Presence" – PF

Tabled to May meeting.

4) Grants status: DWL / AWAC & Edison grants – MW & committee

Tabled to May meeting.

5) DWL Landscape Tour: Committee Report – RR, MW, CS

Claudia reported that things are going well; this Sunday is the event for Docents and Hosts; Laraine reported very good online registration.

6) MBCA BoD policy for e-votes – LT

This can be taken off the agenda; we agreed on the policy at the last meeting.

Outreach & Communication

1) mbconservation.org: report - LT

Mostly focused on the Tour right now.

2) Mojave Trails National Monument: BLM subcommittee nomination for Pat Flanagan – SB, PF

Pat requested support from MBCA for this. The Board totally supports Pat for this position.

3) DRECP Implementation Subgroup of the BLM DAC: due April – per Chuck Bell, LVEDA

Chuck will do it if no one else wants it – probably Chuck. No discussion or action.

4) SB Co. Environment Element Group Meeting: RCIS (Regional Conservation Investment Strategies) / Assembly Bill 2087– PF, SK

Stephanie Dashiell gave this presentation earlier.

5) Scenic 247: meeting w/ SB Co. LUS (Terri Rahhal & Karen Watkins); Scenic 247 Committee, maybe also Caltrans – Lucerne Valley CC, April 20th – SK

Sarah wrote a letter to Tom Hudson to push on this issue. At Johnson Valley she handed him a letter and Terry Rahhal responded the next week, requesting a meeting with County LUS representatives Karen Watkins and Terry Rahhal and the 247 Committee.

6) Celebration of Victoria Fuller's Life – May 17th, 4:30-6PM @ Joshua Basin Water District; donations and speakers requested

Steve moved that we donate \$200, Ruth seconded. All agreed.

Conservation Issues

1) U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service petitioned to list Joshua Tree as endangered or threatened species, starting 12-month finding: MBCA requested notification of progress – only. - PF

2) Marine Corps' Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Division's coyote depredation program to "reduce the numbers of coyotes that are unnaturally inflated in the local area due to human subsidies. Elevated coyote numbers prove a safety risk to residents, and are a significant factor in the mortality of the desert tortoise." Hi-Desert Star 3/31/2017 — Twenty-three volunteers participated in a coyote hunt, killing 7 coyotes March 25 and 26 at the MCAGCC. The coyotes were killed in 6 areas

on base that officials selected based on their distance from human activity. Sarah sent a letter to Sheriff's Captain Jolie. Whether it's legal is maybe questionable.

3) OHV issues:

a. BLM considering temp "street legal only" for routes using CSA roads – public meeting, April 19th, YVCC - announced in Eblast

Sarah reported there is hope for at least an interim measure. We will update with online news when known.

b. CA. OHV Motor Vehicle Recreation Program – CA. Senate Bill 249 introduced: mandates 5-year regular sunset date for program, increased oversight with rational & transparent policy to address harms in State Vehicle Rec. Areas & federal lands, balance recreation with environmental costs. CBD petition online. Talking to Terri, not hopeful.

c. ARR/COW hiatus – Rose Foundation's Cal Wildlands Fund offered & declined – SK
The hiatus is due in part to the loss of leadership (including Victoria Fuller) and seemed time for a break. Rose Foundation regrets their decline of the grant and expressed concern.

4) update: DHS Council / Mission Creek Rd. developer's appeal for permit to build 2,200 housing units – RR

DHS Council denied extension of the development at the base of Mission Creek. Swing vote, the mayor, had to recuse himself. Claudia heard he's trying to change that situation.

Addition: Claudia noted that she has drafted and will share the proposed MBCA letter to Sioux tribes about the pipeline.

Community Reports & Events

1) BLM public meeting to review temp "street legal vehicle only" status for route system using CSA roads – YVCC, Wed. April 19th, 5:30-6:30PM
Discussion about possibilities.

2) Black Rock Lecture, April 21st, 7PM: *Effective Grassroots Activism*

3) YV Earth Day – Saturday, April 22nd

4) **IN-PERSON REGISTRATION/ DWL TOUR BOOK PICK-UP SITES***

	MORONGO VALLEY	YUCCA VALLEY	JOSHUA TREE	TWENTYNINE PALMS
SAT APRIL 22	Cactus Mart 49889 Twentynine Palms Highway 9AM-12PM	YV Community Center (Earth Day) 57090 Twentynine Palms Highway	Joshua Tree Health Foods 61693 Twentynine Palms Highway	Marilu's Gastropub 73511 Twentynine Palms Highway 9AM-12PM
SUN APRIL 23	Cactus Mart 49889 Twentynine Palms Highway 9AM-12PM	Frontier Café 55844 Twentynine Palms Highway 9AM-12PM	Joshua Tree Health Foods 61693 Twentynine Palms Highway	NONE

Adjourned 7:15 PM.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, May 11th, 2017 5:00 PM / YV Community Center